

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 01766 131359Z

63

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00 SAJ-01

DODE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 OMB-01 H-02 EB-07 FRB-03 /074 W

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R 122057Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6410

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PAIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 1766

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MILI, NATO, CA

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE REDUCTION IN CANADIAN MANPOWER COMMITMENT TO NATO

REF: OTTAWA 1757

1. IN RADIO COMMENTARY MAY 12, JOURNALIST JACK BEST  
REPEATED ALLEGATIONS CONTAINED IN MAY 8 OTTAWA JOURNAL  
(PARA 1 REFTEL) AND INSISTED HE HAD EVIDENCE THAT THE  
ALL-AIR OPTION WAS THE ONE PREFERRED IN DEPARTMENT OF  
NATIONAL DEFENSE (DND) CIRCLES. WHILE INDICATING THAT  
THERE WAS SOME OPPOSITION TO THIS OPTION FROM WITHIN  
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PAGE 02 OTTAWA 01766 131359Z

THE DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS OUT OF CONCERN

FOR CANADA'S POLITICAL IMAGE WITHIN NATO, BEST ARGUED  
IN FAVOR OF THE ALL-AIR OPTION AS PROVIDING A MORE  
MEANINGFUL CANADIAN CONTRIBUTION.

2. COMMENT: ADDITIONAL TO BEST'S CLAIMS, HERE ARE  
OBJECTIVE GROUNDS FOR BELIEVING THAT THE ALL-AIR  
OPTION IS BEING SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED FOR CANADA'S  
GROUND CONTINGENT TO REMAIN VIALBE, IT WILL SOON RE-  
QUIRE NEW TANKS OR EXPENSIVE REFURBISHMENT OF OLD  
CENTURIONS. THE AIM OF THE CURRENT CANADAIAN DEFENSE  
REVIEW IS TO ENSURE THAT CANADA GETS THE MAXIMUM IN  
DEFENSE PUNCH FROM THE SCARCE FUNDS AVAIALABLE. THE  
ARGUMENT IS UNDOUBTEDLY BEING MADE IN DND CIRCLES THAT  
THE THE EXPENSE OF ACQUIRING OR REFURBISHING TANKS IS  
NEITHER COST-EFFECTIVE, THERE BEING NO ECONOMIES OF  
SCALE IN THE ACQUISITION OR MAINTENANCE OF A RELATIVELY  
SMALL NUMBER OF TANKS,NOR JUSTIFIED GIVEN THE FACT  
THAT TANKS CANNOT BE USED FOR ANY CANADIAN DEFENSE ROLE  
EXCEPT THE NATO ONE. THEALL -AIR OPTION IS CERTAINLY  
ATTRACTIVE ALSO FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF RELEASING  
SOME 2,8000 PERSONNEL FOR OTHER DUTIES, AN IMPORTANT  
CONSIDERATION FOR A MANPOWER-SHORT DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT.  
THESE CONSIDERATIONS, TOGETHER WITH THE TRUDEAU AND  
MACEACHEN EVASIVENESS ON THE ISSUE NOTED REFTEL, SUGGEST  
THAT THE AALL-AIR NATO OPTION COULD WELL GET THE NOD.

3. IT MAY BE THAT AN ALL-AIR CANADIAN NATO FORCE MIGHT  
BE AS MILITARILY EFFECTIVE AS THE PRESENT MIXM  
HOWEVER, IF ACTUAL SIZE OF THE CANADIAN MANPOWER CON-  
TINGENT PHYSICALY LOATED IN EUROPE IS POLITICALLYN  
AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY MORE SIGNIFICANT, PARTICULARLY  
SINCE THE ALL-AIR OPTION WOULD REPRESENT AMORE THAN  
50 PER CENT REDUCTION OF CANADA'S NATO-COMMITTED  
PERSONNEL, DEPT SHOULD CONSIDER MERIT OF WEIGHING IN  
NOW WITH GOC BEFORE THE CANADIAN DEFENSE REVIEW  
REACHES THE DND RECOMMENDATION AND CABINET DECISION  
STAGES. EMBASSY IS MUNDFUL THAT USG HAS IN PAST  
ARGUED THAT ITS OWN REDUCTIONS IN MANPOWER IN EUROPE  
DID NOT REPRESENT REDUCTION IN MILITARY EFFECTIVENESS.  
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PAGE 03 OTTAWA 01766 131359Z

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## Message Attributes

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